

FORM B - BUILDING

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
294 WASHINGTON STREET, BOSTON, MA 02108

AREA	FORM NO. 523
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City Lexington

Address 430 Massachusetts Avenue

Historic Name Willard Cooke House

Use: Present residential

Original residential

DESCRIPTION:

Date 1892

Source Lexington Minute Man, Dec. 9, 1892

SKETCH MAP

Show property's location in relation to nearest cross streets and/or geographical features. Indicate all buildings between inventoried property and nearest intersection. Indicate north.



Recorded by Anne Grady

Organization Lexington Historical Commission

Date April, 1984

Style Queen Anne Dutch Colonial Revival

Architect _____

Exterior wall fabric aluminum siding

Outbuildings _____

Major alterations (with dates) wooden

balustrades removed or replaced with

metal ones (recent date)

Moved _____ Date _____

Approx. acreage 5700 ft.²

Setting A prominent site on a hill

considerably above Massachusetts Avenue.

(Staple additional sheets here)

ARCHITECTURAL SIGNIFICANCE (Describe important architectural features and evaluate in terms of other buildings within the community.)

An historic photograph shows this house to have been a substantial late nineteenth century structure with elements of Shingle and Queen Anne styles, including a balustraded porch, bay windows and a palladian window. All original finish and trim has been replaced with artificial siding or metalwork.

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE (Explain the role owners played in local or state history and how the building relates to the development of the community.)

The local paper reports that this house was built in 1892 by "Theodore Munroe, a Lexington boy." The paper called the house "quite pretentious" and further stated, "Mr. Munroe bought a large tract of land as a speculative scheme and has had it cut up into house lots . . . several of which are already sold." (Note: there is no reference to Theodore Munroe in the local genealogy.)

The development was laid out with 52 tiny lots, averaging 6,000 square feet, adjoining Hillside Avenue, Lisbeth Street, Clelland Road. People were enticed to see the lots by offer of a free train ticket, but few lots sold, evidently, and most have proved unbuildable because of the precipitous slope and rock ledge.

Lexington resident, Dorothy Foster's, grandfather, Willard Cooke, a journalist, was one of those who accepted the train ticket and bought a lot, but soon afterward (in 1893) bought Munroe's house.

The Hillside Avenue development was one of two early 1890s development schemes which offered free transportation to potential buyers. The other was Meagherville in North Lexington. There too many of the lots proved unbuildable being wetlands. Munroe does not appear in the Lexington directories by 1894.

BIBLIOGRAPHY and/or REFERENCES (name of publication, author, date and publisher)

Lexington Minute Man, December 9, 1892.

Historic photograph in the possession of Dorothy Foster.

1906 atlas

1894 Directory

1899 Directory

1906 Directory

Personal communication from Dorothy Foster.

INVENTORY FORM CONTINUATION SHEET

MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL COMMISSION
Office of the Secretary, Boston

Community:

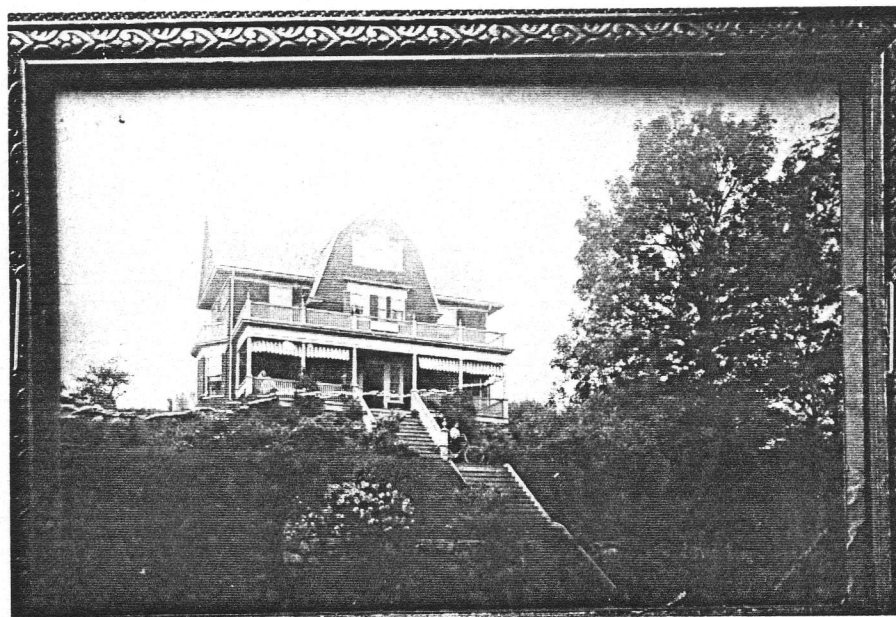
Lexington

Form No:

523

Property Name: 430 Massachusetts Ave.

Indicate each item on inventory form which is being continued below.



Early ²⁰19th century ^{photograph} in the possession of Dorothy Foster, 9 Plainfield St.

Staple to Inventory form at bottom